

Rutgers Council of AAUP Chapters

American Association of University Professors - American Federation of Teachers
The Daily Targum April 26, 2005

An Open Letter from the Rutgers Council of AAUP Chapters to
Albert R. Gamper, Jr., Chair of the Board of Governors and Richard L. McCormick, President

Dear Chairman Gamper and President McCormick:

We must work together to ensure that Rutgers will enjoy a well deserved reputation for excellence in education and innovation in research. Our commitment to preserving academic freedom and academic excellence requires that we provide all of our faculty members with the kinds of compensation, governance rights and working conditions that will attract and retain the very best and promote the quality teaching and research our students and the public deserve.

Yet, 625 faculty members, or 23% of all full time faculty members at Rutgers, are off the tenure track. Most are hired on year-to-year contracts without guarantees of academic freedom or adequate governance rights. Although these scholars serve in all academic ranks from instructor to full professor they nonetheless work on the margins of the Rutgers community and do not have access to the full range of opportunities necessary for their professional development.

This second class status weighs heavily upon the 220 instructional faculty who are subject to a university regulation (Section 3.3.14) that compels their dismissal or demotion after four years of service regardless of the quality of their work or the contributions they have made in educating thousands of our students.

We call on the Board of Governors to abolish the four year limit and to consider the following reforms designed to bring the non-tenure track faculty more fully into the Rutgers community.

- Full and appropriate governance rights in departments, units, and university bodies.
- Consideration and evaluation appropriate to their appointments and a separate monetary pool in regard to merit increases.
- Access to internal Rutgers grants for research and curricular development.

The working conditions of the faculty are the same conditions under which students learn and new knowledge is produced. Let us be guided by our commitment to our students and the common good. We can all serve the public interest better by enacting reforms designed to promote a more stable, engaged, and accomplished faculty. The abolition of the four year limit would serve the interests of faculty and students and signal the public that our actions are in accordance with our aspirations for excellence.

Yours truly,

Rudy Bell, President
On behalf of the Executive Council and the Non-Tenure-Track Caucus of the AAUP